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THE EVERY-DAY MARRIED LADY.

It might be supposed that the every-day married lady was formerly the every-day young lady, and has now merely changed her condition. But this is not the case, for nothing is more common than to see the most holiday spinsters settle down into the most working-day matrons. The married lady, in fact, of the species we would describe has no descent in particular. If you can imagine a pupa coming into the world of itself without any connection with the larva, or an imago unconscious of the pupa, that is the every-day married lady. She is born at the altar, conjured into life by the ceremonial, and having utterly lost her individual existence, becomes from that moment a noun of multitude. People may say, 'Oh, this is our old acquaintance Miss Smith!' but that is only calling names, for the identity is gone. If she is anything at all but what appertains to the present, she is the late Miss Smith, who has survived herself, and changed into a family.

We would insist upon this peculiarity of the every-day married lady—that her existence is collective. Her very language is in the plural number—such as we, ours, and us. She respects the rights of paternity so much, as never to permit herself to talk of her children as peculiarly her own. Her individuality being merged in her husband and their actual or possible offspring, she has no private thoughts, no wishes, no hopes, no fears but for the concern. And this is all the better for her tranquillity: for although a part of her husband, she does not quite fancy that he is a part of her. She leaves at least the business to his management, and if she does advise and suggest on occasions, she thinks that somehow things will come out very well. She feels that she is only a passenger; and although, as such, she may recommend the skipper to shorten sail when weathering a critical point, or, for the sake of safety, to come to anchor in the middle of the sea, she has still a certain faith in his skill or luck, and sleeps quietly in the storm. For this reason the every-day married lady is comfortable in the figure, and has usually good round features of her own. The Miss Smith she has survived had a slender waist and small delicate hands; but this lady is a very tolerable armful, and the wedding-ring makes such a hollow on her finger, that one might think it would be difficult to get off.

The every-day married lady is commonly reported to be selfish; but this is a mistake. At least her selfishness embraces the whole family circle: it has no personality. When the wife of a poor man, she will sit up half the night sewing and darning, but not a stitch for herself: that can be done at any time; but the boys must go comfortably to school, and the girls look genteel on the street, and the husband—to think of Mr Brown wanting a button on his shirt! She looks selfish, be-

cause her eye is always on her own, and because she talks of what she is always thinking about; but how can one be selfish who is perpetually postponing herself, who dresses the plainest, eats the coarsest, and sleeps the least of the family? She never puts herself forward in company unless her young ladies want backing; but yet she never feels herself overlooked, for every word, every glance bestowed upon them, is communicated electrically to her. She is, indeed, in such perfect rapport with the concern, that it is no uncommon thing for her to go home chuckling with amusement, overpowered with delight, from a party at which she had not once opened her lips. This is the party which she pronounces to have 'gone off' well. Half-observant people fancy that the calculation is made on the score of the jellies and ices, and singing and dancing, and so on, and influenced by a secret comparison with her own achievements; but she has more depth than they imagine, and finer sympathies—they don't understand her.

Not that the every-day married lady is unsocial—not at all: all comfortable people are social; but she is partial to her own class, and does not care to carry her confidences out of it. She has several intimate friends whom she is fond of meeting; but besides that, she is a sort of freemason in her way, and finds out every-day people by the word and sign. Rank has very little to do with this society, as you would find if you observed her sitting at a cottage door, where, in purchasing a draught of milk, she has recognised a sister. If these two every-day married women had been rocked in the same cradle, they could not talk more intimately; and indeed they have heavy matters to talk about, for of all the babies that ever came into this breathing world, theirs were the most extraordinary babies. The miracle is, that any of them are extant after such outrageous measles, and scarlet fevers, and chicken-poxes—prophesied of, so to speak, even before their birth, by memorabilia that might have alarmed Dr Simson. The interlocutors part very well pleased with each other: the cottager proud to find that she has so much in common with a real lady, and the lady pronouncing the reflection of herself she had met with to be a most sensible individual.

Although careless in this instance of the circumstance of rank, the every-day married lady has but little sympathy with the class of domestic servants. She looks upon her servants, in fact, as in some sort her natural enemies, and her life may therefore be said to be passed at the best in a state of armed neutrality. She commonly proceeds on the allowance system; and this is the best way, as it prevents so many sickening apprehensions touching that leg of mutton. Indeed the appetite of servants is a constant puzzle to her: she cannot make it out. She has a sharp eye, too, upon the

policeman, and wonders what on earth he always looks down her area for. As for followers, that is quite out of the question. Servants stay long enough upon their errands to talk to all the men and women in the parish; and the idea of having an acquaintance now and then besides—more especially of the male sex—tramping into the kitchen to see them, is wildly unnatural. She tells of a sailor whom she once detected sitting in the coolest possible manner by the fireside. When she appeared, the man rose up and bowed—and then sat down again. Think of that! The artful girl said he was her brother!—and here all the every-day married ladies in the company laugh bitterly. Since that time she has been haunted by a sailor, and smells tar in all sorts of places.

If she ever has a passable servant, whom she is able to keep for a reasonable number of years, she gets gradually attached to her, and pets and coddles her. Betty is a standing testimony to her nice discrimination, and a perpetual premium on her successful rearing of servants. But alas! the end of it all is, that the respectable slut gets married to the green-grocer, and leaves her indulgent mistress: a striking proof of the heartlessness and ingratitude of the whole tribe! If it is not marriage, however, that calls her away, but bad health; if she goes home unwell, or is carried to the infirmary—what then? Why, then, we are sorry to say, she passes utterly away from the observation and memory of the every-day married lady. This may be reckoned a bad trait in her character; and yet it is in some degree allied to the great virtue of her life. Servants are the evil principle in her household, which it is her business to combat and hold in obedience. A very large proportion of her time is spent in this virtuous warfare; and success on her part ought to be considered deserving of the gratitude of the vanquished, without imposing burthens upon the victor.

The every-day married lady is the inventor of a thing which few foreign nations have as yet adopted either in their houses or languages. This thing is Comfort. The word cannot well be defined, the items that enter into its composition being so numerous, that a description would read like a catalogue. We all understand, however, what it means, although few of us are sensible of the source of the enjoyment. A widower has very little comfort, and a bachelor none at all; while a married man—provided his wife be an every-day married lady—enjoys it in perfection. But he enjoys it unconsciously, and therefore ungratefully: it is a thing of course—a necessary, a right, of the want of which he complains without being distinctly sensible of its presence. Even when it acquires sufficient intensity to arrest his attention, when his features and his heart soften, and he looks round with a half smile on his face, and says, 'This is comfort!' it never occurs to him to inquire where it all comes from. His every-day wife is sitting quietly in the corner: it was not she who lighted the fire, or dressed the dinner, or drew the curtains, and it never occurs to him to think that all these, and a hundred other circumstances of the moment, owe their virtue to her spicing, and that the comfort which enriches the atmosphere, which sparkles in the embers, which broods in the shadowy parts of the room, which glows in his own full heart, emanates from her, and encircles her like an aureola. We have suggested, on a former occasion, that our conventional notions of the sex, in its gentle, modest, and retiring characteristics, are derived from the every-day young lady; and in like manner we venture to opine

that the every-day married lady is the English wife of foreigners and moralists. Thus she is a national character, and a personage of history; and yet there she sits all the while in that corner, knitting something or other, and thinking to herself that she had surely smelt a puff of tar as she was passing the pantry.

The curious thing is, that the dispenser of comfort can do with a very small share of it herself. When her husband does not dine at home, it is surprising what odds and ends are sufficient to make up the dinner. Perhaps the best part of it is a large slice of bread and butter; for it is wasting the servants' time to make them cook when there is *nobody* to be at the table. But she makes up for this at tea: that is a comfortable meal for the every-day married lady. The husband, a matter-of-fact, impassive fellow, swallows down his two or three cups in utter unconsciousness of the poetry of the occasion; while the wife pauses on every sip, drinks in the aroma as well as the infusion, fills slowly and lingeringly out, and creams and sugars as if her hands dallied over a labour of love. With her daughters, in the meantime, grown up, or even half-grown up, she exchanges words and looks of motherly and masonic intelligence: she is moulding them to comfort, initiating them in every-dayism; and as their heads bend companionably towards each other, you see at a glance that the girls will do honour to their breeding. The husband calls this 'dawdling,' and already begins to fret. Let him: he knows nothing about it.

It is surprising the affection of the daughters for their every-day mother. Not that the sentiment is steady or uniform in its expression, for sometimes one might suppose mamma to be forgotten, or at least considered only as a daily necessary not requiring any special notice. But wait till a grief comes, and mark to what bosom the panting girl flies for refuge and comfort; see with what *abandon* she flings her arms round that maternal neck, and with what a passionate burst the hitherto repressed tears gush forth. This is something more than habit, something more than filial trust. There are more senses than five in human nature—or seven either: there is a fine and subtle link between these two beings—a common atmosphere of thought and feeling, impalpable and imperceptible, yet necessary to the souls of both. If you doubt it—if you doubt that there is a moral attraction in the every-day married lady, irrespective of blood-affinity, carry your view forward to another generation, and interrogate those witnesses who are never mistaken in character, and who never give false testimony—little children. They dote on their every-day grandmamma. Their natures, not yet seared and hardened by the world, understand hers; and with something of the fresh perfume of Eden about them still, they recognise instinctively those blessed souls to whom God has given to love little children.

This is farther shown when the every-day married lady dies. What is there in the character we have drawn to account for the shock the whole family receives? The husband feels as if a thunder-cloud had fallen, and gathered, and blackened upon his heart, through which he could never again see the sun. The grown-up children, especially the females, are distracted; 'their purposes are broken off'; they desire to have nothing more to do with the world; they lament as those who will not be comforted. Even common acquaintances look round them, when they enter the house, with uneasiness and anxiety—

'We miss her when the morning calls,
As one that mingled in our mirth;
We miss her when the evening falls—
A trifle wanted on the earth!

Some fancy small, or subtle thought,
Is checked ere to its blossom grown;
Some chain is broken that we wrought,
Now—she hath flown!

And so she passes away—this every-day married lady—leaving memorials of her commonplace existence

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everywhere throughout the circle in which she lived, moved, and had her being, and after having stamped herself permanently upon the constitution, both moral and physical, of her descendants. I. R.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A POLICE-OFFICER.

LEGAL METAMORPHOSES.

THE respectable agent of a rather eminent French house arrived one morning in great apparent distress at Scotland Yard, and informed the superintendent that he had just sustained a great, almost ruinous, loss in notes of the Bank of England and commercial bills of exchange, besides a considerable sum in gold. He had, it appeared, been absent in Paris about ten days, and on his return but a few hours previously, discovered that his iron chest had been completely rifled during his absence. False keys must have been used, as the empty chest was found locked, and no sign of violence could be observed. He handed in full written details of the property carried off, the numbers of the notes, and every other essential particular. The first step taken was to ascertain if any of the notes had been tendered at the bank. Not one had been presented; payment was of course stopped, and advertisements descriptive of the bills of exchange, as well as of the notes, were inserted in the evening and following morning papers. A day or two afterwards, a considerable reward was offered for such information as might lead to the apprehension of the offenders. No result followed; and spite of the active exertions of the officers employed, not the slightest clue could be obtained to the perpetrators of the robbery. The junior partner in the firm, M. Bellebon, in the meantime arrived in England, to assist in the investigation, and was naturally extremely urgent in his inquiries; but the mystery which enveloped the affair remained impenetrable. At last a letter, bearing the St Martin le Grand postmark, was received by the agent, M. Alexandre le Breton, which contained an offer to surrender the whole of the plunder, with the exception of the gold, for the sum of one thousand pounds. The property which had been abstracted was more than ten times that sum, and had been destined by the French house to meet some heavy liabilities falling due in London very shortly. Le Breton had been ordered to pay the whole amount into Hoare's to the account of the firm, and had indeed been severely blamed for not having done so as he received the different notes and bills; and it was on going to the chest immediately on his return from Paris, for the purpose of fulfilling the preperatory instructions he had received, that M. le Breton discovered the robbery.

The letter went on to state that should the offer be acceded to, a mystically-worded advertisement—of which a copy was enclosed—was to be inserted in the 'Times,' and then a mode would be suggested for safely—in the interest of the thieves of course—carrying the agreement into effect. M. Bellebon was half-inclined to close with this proposal, in order to save the credit of the house, which would be destroyed unless its acceptances, now due in about fourteen days, could be met; and without the stolen moneys and bills of exchange, this was, he feared, impossible. The superintendent, to whom M. Bellebon showed the letter, would not hear of compliance with such a demand, and threatened a prosecution for composition of felony if M. Bellebon persisted in doing so. The advertisement was, however, inserted, and an immediate reply directed

that Le Breton, the agent, should present himself at the Old Manor-House, Green Lanes, Newington, unattended, at four o'clock on the following afternoon, bringing with him of course the stipulated sum in gold. It was added, that to prevent any possible treason (*trahison*, the letter was written in French), Le Breton would find a note for him at the tavern, informing him of the spot—a solitary one, and far away from any place where an ambush could be concealed—where the business would be concluded, and to which he must proceed unaccompanied, and on foot! This proposal was certainly quite as ingenious as it was cool, and the chance of outwitting such cunning rascals seemed exceedingly doubtful. A very tolerable scheme was, however, hit upon, and M. le Breton proceeded at the appointed hour to the Old Manor-House. No letter or message had been left for him, and nobody obnoxious to the slightest suspicion could be seen near or about the tavern. On the following day another missive arrived, which stated that the writer was quite aware of the trick which the police had intended playing him, and he assured M. Bellebon that such a line of conduct was as unwise as it would be fruitless, inasmuch as if 'good faith' was not observed, the securities and notes would be inexorably destroyed or otherwise disposed of, and the house of Bellebon and Company be consequently exposed to the shame and ruin of bankruptcy.

Just at this crisis of the affair I arrived in town from my unsuccessful hunt after the fugitives who had slipped through my fingers at Plymouth. The superintendent laughed heartily, not so much at the trick by which I had been duped, as at the angry mortification I did not affect to conceal. He presently added, 'I have been wishing for your return, in order to intrust you with a tangled affair, in which success will amply compensate for such a disappointment. You know French too, which is fortunate; for the gentleman who has been plundered understands little or no English.' He then related the foregoing particulars, with other apparently slight circumstances; and after a long conversation with him, I retired to think the matter over, and decide upon the likeliest mode of action. After much cogitation, I determined to see M. Bellebon *alone*; and for this purpose I despatched the waiter of a tavern adjacent to his lodgings, with a note expressive of my wish to see him instantly on pressing business. He was at home, and immediately acceded to my request. I easily introduced myself; and after about a quarter of an hour's conference, said carelessly—for I saw he was too heedless of speech, too quick and frank, to be intrusted with the dim suspicions which certain trifling indices had suggested to me—'Is Monsieur le Breton at the office where the robbery was committed?'

'No: he is gone to Greenwich on business, and will not return till late in the evening. But if you wish to re-examine the place, I can of course enable you to do so.'

'It will, I think, be advisable; and you will, if you please,' I added, as we emerged into the street, 'permit me to take you by the arm, in order that the official character of my visit may not be suspected by any one there.'

He laughingly complied, and we arrived at the house arm in arm. We were admitted by an elderly woman; and there was a young man—a moustached clerk—seated at a desk in an inner room writing. He eyed me for a moment, somewhat askance I thought, but I gave him no opportunity for a distinct view of my features; and I presently handed M. Bellebon a card, on which I had contrived to write, unobserved, 'send away the clerk.' This was more naturally done than I anticipated; and in answer to M. Bellebon's glance of inquiry, I merely said, 'that as I did not wish to be known there as a police-officer, it was essential that

the minute search I was about to make should be without witnesses.' He agreed; and the woman was also sent away upon a distant errand. Every conceivable place did I ransack; every scrap of paper that had writing on it I eagerly perused. At length the search was over, apparently without result.

'You are quite sure, Monsieur Bellebon, as you informed the superintendent, that Monsieur le Breton has no female relations or acquaintances in this country?'

'Positive,' he replied. 'I have made the most explicit inquiries on the subject both of the clerk Dubarle and of the woman-servant.'

Just then the clerk returned, out of breath with haste I noticed, and I took my leave without even now affording the young gentleman so clear a view of my face as he was evidently anxious to obtain.

'No female acquaintance!' thought I, as I re-entered the private room of the tavern I had left an hour before. 'From whom came, then, these scraps of perfumed note-paper I have found in his desk I wonder?' I sat down and endeavoured to piece them out, but after considerable trouble, satisfied myself that they were parts of different notes, and so small, unfortunately, as to contain nothing which separately afforded any information except that they were all written by one hand, and that a female one.

About two hours after this I was sauntering along in the direction of Stoke-Newington, where I was desirous of making some inquiries as to another matter, and had passed the Kingslaw Gate a few hundred yards, when a small discoloured printed handbill, lying in a haberdasher's shop window, arrested my attention. 'It ran thus:—Two guinea reward.—Lost, an Italian greyhound. The tip of its tail has been chopped off, and it answers to the name of Fidèle.' Underneath, the reader was told in writing to 'inquire within.'

'Fidèle!' I mentally exclaimed. 'Any relation to M. le Breton's fair correspondent's Fidèle, I wonder?' In a twinkling my pocket-book was out, and I reperused by the gas-light on one of the perfumed scraps of paper the following portion of a sentence, '*ma pauvre Fidèle est perdue*'. The bill, I observed, was dated nearly three weeks previously. I forthwith entered the shop, and pointing to the bill, said I knew a person who had found such a dog as was there advertised for. The woman at the counter said she was glad to hear it, as the lady, formerly a customer of theirs, was much grieved at the animal's loss.

'What is the lady's name?' I asked.

'I can't rightly pronounce the name,' was the reply. 'It is French, I believe; but here it is, with the address, in the day-book, written by herself.'

I eagerly read—'Madame Levasseur, Oak Cottage; about one mile on the road from Edmonton to Southgate.' The handwriting greatly resembled that on the scraps I had taken from M. le Breton's desk; and the writer was French too! Here were indications of a trail which might lead to unhopd-for success, and I determined to follow it up vigorously. After one or two other questions, I left the shop, promising to send the dog to the lady the next day. My business at Stoke-Newington was soon accomplished. I then hastened westward to the establishment of a well-known dog-fancier, and procured the loan, at a reasonable price, of an ugly Italian hound: the requisite loss of the tip of its tail was very speedily accomplished, and so quickly healed, that the newness of the excision could not be suspected. I arrived at the lady's residence about twelve o'clock on the following day, so thoroughly disguised as a vagabond Cockney dog-stealer, that my own wife, when I entered the breakfast parlour just previous to starting, screamed with alarm and surprise. The mistress of Oak Cottage was at home, but indisposed, and the servant said she would take the dog to her, though, if I would take it out of the basket, she herself could tell me if it was Fidèle or not. I replied that I would only show the dog to the lady, and would not trust it out of my hands. This message was carried up

stairs, and after waiting some time outside—for the woman, with natural precaution, considering my appearance, for the safety of the portable articles lying about, had closed the street-door in my face—I was readmitted, desired to wipe my shoes carefully, and walk up. Madame Levasseur, a showy-looking woman, though not over-refined in speech or manners, was seated on a sofa, in vehement expectation of embracing her dear Fidèle; but my vagabond appearance so startled her, that she screamed loudly for her husband, M. Levasseur. This gentleman, a fine, tall, whiskered, moustached person, hastened into the apartment half-shaved, and with his razor in his hand.

'Qu'est ce qu'il y a donc?' he demanded.

'Mais voyez cette horreur là,' replied the lady, meaning me, not the dog, which I was slowly emancipating from the basket-kennel. The gentleman laughed; and reassured by the presence of her husband, Madame Levasseur's anxieties concentrated themselves upon the expected Fidèle.

'Mais, mon Dieu!' she exclaimed again as I displayed the aged beauty I had brought for her inspection, 'why, that is not Fidèle!'

'Not, marm?' I answered, with quite innocent surprise. 'Vy, ere is her very tail;' and I held up the mutilated extremity for her closer inspection. The lady was not, however, to be convinced even by that evidence; and as the gentleman soon became impatient of my persistence, and hinted very intelligibly that he had a mind to hasten my passage down stairs with the toe of his boot, I, having made the best possible use of my eyes during the short interview, scrambled up the dog and basket, and departed.

'No female relative or acquaintance hasn't he?' was my exulting thought as I gained the road. 'And yet if that is not M. le Breton's picture between those of the husband and wife, I am a booby, and a blind one.' I no longer in the least doubted that I had struck a brilliant trail; and I could have shouted with exultation, so eager was I not only to retrieve my, as I fancied, somewhat tarnished reputation for activity and skill, but to extricate the plundered firm from their terrible difficulties; the more especially as young M. Bellebon, with the frankness of his age and nation, had hinted to me—and the suddenly-tremulous light of his fine expressive eyes testified to the acuteness of his apprehensions—that his marriage with a long-loved and amiable girl depended upon his success in saving the credit of his house.

That same evening, about nine o'clock, M. Levasseur, expensively, but withal snobbishly attired, left Oak Cottage, walked to Edmonton, hailed a cab, and drove off rapidly towards town, followed by an English swell as stylishly and snobbishly dressed, wigged, whiskered, and moustached as himself: this English swell being no other than myself, as prettily metamorphosed and made up for the part I intended playing as heart could wish.

M. Levasseur descended at the end of the Quadrant, Regent Street, and took his way to Vine Street, leading out of that celebrated thoroughfare. I followed; and observing him enter a public-house, unhesitatingly did the same. It was a house of call and general rendezvous for foreign servants out of place. Valets, couriers, cooks, of many varieties of shade, nation, and respectability, were assembled there, smoking, drinking, and playing at an insufferably noisy game, unknown, I believe, to Englishmen, and which must, I think, have been invented in sheer despair of cards, dice, or other implements of gambling. The sole instruments of play were the gamblers' fingers, of which the two persons playing suddenly and simultaneously uplifted as many, or as few, as they pleased, each player alternately calling a number; and if he named precisely how many fingers were held up by himself and opponent, he marked a point. The hubbub of cries—'cinq,' 'neuf,' 'dix,' &c.—was deafening. The players—almost everybody in the large room—were too much occupied to

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notice our entrance; and M. Levasseur and myself seated ourselves, and called for something to drink, without, I was glad to see, exciting the slightest observation. M. Levasseur, I soon perceived, was an intimate acquaintance of many there; and somewhat to my surprise, for he spoke French very well, I found that he was a Swiss. His name was, I therefore concluded, assumed. Nothing positive rewarded my watchfulness that evening; but I felt quite sure Levasseur had come there with the expectation of meeting some one, as he did not play, and went away about half-past eleven o'clock with an obviously discontented air. The following night it was the same; but the next, who should peer into the room about half-past ten, and look cautiously round, but M. Alexandre le Breton! The instant the eyes of the friends met, Levasseur rose and went out. I hesitated to follow, lest such a movement might excite suspicion; and it was well I did not, as they both presently returned, and seated themselves close by my side. The anxious, haggard countenance of Le Breton—who had, I should have before stated, been privately pointed out to me by one of the force early on the morning I visited Oak Cottage—struck me forcibly, especially in contrast with that of Levasseur, which were only an expression of malignant and ferocious triumph, slightly dashed by temporary disappointment. Le Breton stayed but a short time; and the only whispered words I caught were—‘He has, I fear, some suspicion.’

The anxiety and impatience of M. Bellebon whilst this was going on became extreme, and he sent me note after note—the only mode of communication I would permit—expressive of his consternation at the near approach of the time when the engagements of his house would arrive at maturity, without anything having in the meantime been accomplished. I pitied him greatly, and after some thought and hesitation, resolved upon a new and bolder game. By affecting to drink a great deal, occasionally playing, and in other ways exhibiting a reckless, devil-may-care demeanour, I had striven to insinuate myself into the confidence and companionship of Levasseur, but hitherto without much effect; and although once I could see, startled by a casual hint I dropped to another person—one of ours—just sufficiently loud for him to hear—that I knew a sure and safe market for stopped Bank-of-England notes, the cautious scoundrel quickly subsided into his usual guarded reserve. He evidently doubted me, and it was imperatively necessary to remove those doubts. This was at last effectually, and, I am vain enough to think, cleverly done. One evening a rakish-looking man, who ostentatiously and repeatedly declared himself to be Mr Trelawney of Conduit Street, and who was evidently three parts intoxicated, seated himself directly in front of us, and with much braggart impudence boasted of his money, at the same time displaying a pocket-book, which seemed pretty full of Bank-of-England notes. There were only a few persons present in the room besides us, and they were at the other end of the room. Levasseur, I saw, noticed with considerable interest the look of greed and covetousness which I fixed on that same pocket-book. At length the stranger rose to depart. I also hurried up and slipped after him, and was quietly and slyly followed by Levasseur. After proceeding about a dozen paces I looked furtively about, but not behind; robbed Mr Trelawney of his pocket-book, which he had placed in one of the tails of his coat; crossed over the street, and walked hurriedly away, still, I could hear, followed by Levasseur. I entered another public-house, strode into an empty back-room, and was just in the act of examining my prize, when in stepped Levasseur. He looked triumphant as Lucifer, as he clapped me on the shoulder, and said in a low exulting voice, ‘I saw that pretty trick, Williams, and can, if I like, transport you!’

My consternation was naturally extreme, and Levasseur laughed immensely at the terror he excited. ‘Soyez tranquille,’ he said at last, at the same time ringing the bell: ‘I shall not hurt you.’ He ordered

some wine, and after the waiter had fulfilled the order and left the room, said, ‘Those notes of Mr Trelawney’s will of course be stopped in the morning, but I think I once heard you say you knew of a market for such articles?’

I hesitated, coyly unwilling to further commit myself. ‘Come, come,’ resumed Levasseur in a still low but menacing tone, ‘no nonsense. I have you now; you are, in fact, entirely in my power: but be candid, and you are safe. Who is your friend?’

‘He is not in town now,’ I stammered.

‘Stuff—humbug! I have myself some notes to change. There, now we understand each other. What does he give, and how does he dispose of them?’

‘He gives about a third generally, and gets rid of them abroad. They reach the Bank through *bona-fide* and innocent holders, and in that case the Bank is of course bound to pay.’

‘Is that the law also with respect to bills of exchange?’

‘Yes, to be sure it is.’

‘And is amount of any consequence to your friend?’

‘None, I believe, whatever.’

‘Well, then, you must introduce me to him.’

‘No, that I can’t,’ I hurriedly answered. ‘He won’t deal with strangers.’

‘You must, I tell you, or I will call an officer.’ Terrified by this threat, I muttered that his name was Levi Samuel.

‘And where does Levi Samuel live?’

‘That,’ I replied, ‘I cannot tell; but I know how to communicate with him.’

Finally, it was settled by Levasseur that I should dine at Oak Cottage the next day but one, and that I should arrange with Samuel to meet us there immediately afterwards. The notes and bills he had to dispose of, I was to inform Samuel, amounted to nearly twelve thousand pounds, and I was promised £500 for effecting the bargain.

‘Five hundred pounds, remember, Williams,’ said Levasseur as we parted; ‘or, if you deceive me, transportation! You can prove nothing regarding me, whereas I could settle you offhand.’

The superintendent and I had a long and rather anxious conference the next day. We agreed that, situate as Oak Cottage was, in an open space away from any other building, it would not be advisable that any officer except myself and the pretended Samuel should approach the place. We also agreed as to the probability of such clever rogues having so placed the notes and bills that they could be consumed or otherwise destroyed on the slightest alarm, and that the open arrest of Levasseur, and a search of Oak Cottage, would in all likelihood prove fruitless. ‘There will be only two of them,’ I said in reply to a remark of the superintendent as to the somewhat dangerous game I was risking with powerful and desperate men, ‘even should Le Breton be there; and surely Jackson and I, aided by the surprise and our pistols, will be too many for them.’ Little more was said, the superintendent wished us luck, and I sought out and instructed Jackson.

I will confess that, on setting out the next day to keep my appointment, I felt considerable anxiety. Levasseur might have discovered my vocation, and set this trap for my destruction. Yet that was hardly possible. At all events, whatever the danger, it was necessary to face it; and having cleaned and loaded my pistols with unusual care, and bade my wife a more than usually earnest farewell, which, by the way, rather startled her, I set off, determined, as we used to say in Yorkshire, ‘to win the horse or lose the saddle.’

I arrived in good time at Oak Cottage, and found my host in the highest possible spirits. Dinner was ready, he said, but it would be necessary to wait a few minutes for the two friends he expected.

‘Two friends!’ I exclaimed, really startled. ‘You

told me last evening there was to be only one, a Monsieur le Breton.'

'True,' rejoined Levasseur carelessly; 'but I had forgotten that another party as much interested as ourselves would like to be present, and invite himself, if I did not. But there will be enough for us all, never fear,' he added with a coarse laugh, 'especially as Madame Levasseur does not dine with us.'

At this moment a loud knock was heard. 'Here they are!' exclaimed Levasseur, and hastened out to meet them. I peeped through the blind, and to my great alarm saw that Le Breton was accompanied by the clerk Dubarle! My first impulse was to seize my pistols and rush out of the house; but calmer thoughts soon succeeded, and the improbability that a plan had been laid to entrap me recurred forcibly. Still, should the clerk recognise me? The situation was undoubtedly a critical one; but I was in for it, and must therefore brave the matter out in the best way I could.

Presently a conversation, carried on in a loud, menacing tone in the next room between Levasseur and the new-comers, arrested my attention, and I softly approached the door to listen. Le Breton, I soon found, was but half a villain, and was extremely anxious that the property should not be disposed of till at least another effort had been made at negotiation. The others, now that a market for the notes and securities had been obtained, were determined to avail themselves of it, and immediately leave the country. The almost agonized intreaties of Le Breton that they would not utterly ruin the house he had betrayed, were treated with scornful contempt, and he was at length silenced by their brutal menaces. Le Breton, I further learned, was a cousin of Madame Levasseur, whose husband had first pillaged him at play, and then suggested the crime which had been committed as the sole means of concealing the defalcations of which he, Levasseur, had been the occasion and promoter.

After a brief delay, all three entered the dining-room, and a slight but significant start which the clerk Dubarle gave, as Levasseur, with mock ceremony, introduced me, made my heart, as folk say, leap into my mouth. His half-formed suspicions seemed, however, to be dissipated for the moment by the humorous account Levasseur gave him of the robbery of Mr Trelawney, and we sat down to a very handsome dinner.

A more uncomfortable one, albeit, I never assisted at. The furtive looks of Dubarle, who had been only partially reassured, grew more and more inquisitive and earnest. Fortunately Levasseur was in rollicking spirits and humour, and did not heed the unquiet glances of the young man; and as for Le Breton, he took little notice of anybody. At last this terrible dinner was over, and the wine was pushed briskly round. I drank much more freely than usual, partly with a view to calm my nerves, and partly to avoid remark. It was nearly the time for the Jew's appearance, when Dubarle, after a scrutinising and somewhat imperious look at my face, said abruptly, 'I think, Monsieur Williams, I have seen you somewhere before?'

'Very likely,' I replied with as much indifference as I could assume. 'Many persons have seen me before—some of them once or twice too often.'

'True!' exclaimed Levasseur with a shout. 'Trelawney, for instance!'

'I should like to see monsieur with his wig off!' said the clerk with increasing insolence.

'Nonsense, Dubarle; you are a fool,' exclaimed Levasseur; 'and I will not have my good friend Williams insulted.'

Dubarle did not persist, but it was plain enough that some dim remembrance of my features continued to haunt and perplex him.

At length, and the relief was unspeakable, a knock at the outer door announced Jackson—Levi Samuel I mean. We all jumped up, and ran to the window. It was the Jew sure enough, and admirably he had dressed and now looked the part. Levasseur went out, and in

a minute or two returned introducing him. Jackson could not suppress a start as he caught sight of the tall, moustached addition to the expected company; and although he turned it off very well, it drove the Jewish dialect in which he had been practising completely out of his thoughts and speech, as he said, 'You have more company than my friend Williams led me to expect?'

'A friend—one friend extra, Mr Samuel,' said Levasseur; 'that is all. Come, sit down, and let me help you to a glass of wine. You are an English Jew I perceive?'

'Yes.'

A silence of a minute or two succeeded, and then Levasseur said, 'You are of course prepared for business?'

'Yes—that is, if you are reasonable.'

'Reasonable! the most reasonable men in the world,' rejoined Levasseur with a loud laugh. 'But pray where is the gold you mean to pay us with?'

'If we agree, I will fetch it in half an hour. I do not carry bags of sovereigns about with me into all companies,' replied Jackson with much readiness.

'Well, that's right enough: and now how much discount do you charge?'

'I will tell you when I see the securities.'

Levasseur rose without another word, and left the apartment. He was gone about ten minutes, and on his return, deliberately counted out the stolen Bank-of-England notes and bills of exchange. Jackson got up from his chair, peered close to them, and began noting down the amounts in his pocket-book. I also rose, and pretended to be looking at a picture by the fireplace. The moment was a nervous one, as the signal had been agreed upon, and could not now be changed or deferred. The clerk Dubarle also hastily rose, and eyed Jackson with flaming but indecisive looks. The examination of the securities was at length terminated, and Jackson began counting the Bank-of-England notes aloud—'One—two—three—four—five!' As the signal word passed his lips, he threw himself upon Le Breton, who sat next to him; and at the same moment I passed one of my feet between Dubarle's, and with a dexterous twist hurled him violently on the floor; another instant and my grasp was on the throat of Levasseur, and my pistol at his ear. 'Hurra!' we both shouted with eager excitement; and before either of the villains could recover from his surprise, or indeed perfectly comprehend what had happened, Levasseur and Le Breton were handcuffed, and resistance was out of the question. Young Dubarle was next easily secured.

Levasseur, the instant he recovered the use of his faculties, which the completeness and suddenness of the surprise and attack had paralysed, yelled like a madman with rage and anger, and but for us, would, I verily believe, have dashed his brains out against the walls of the room. The other two were calmer, and having at last thoroughly pinioned and secured them, and carefully gathered up the recovered plunder, we left Oak Cottage in triumph, letting ourselves out, for the woman-servant had gone off, doubtless to acquaint her mistress with the disastrous turn affairs had taken. No inquiry was made after either of them.

An hour afterwards the prisoners were securely locked up, and I hurried to acquaint M. Bellebon with the fortunate issue of our enterprise. His exultation, it will be readily believed, was unbounded; and I left him busy with letters to the firm, and doubtless one to 'cette chère et aimable Louise,' announcing the joyful news.

The prisoners, after a brief trial, which many readers of this narrative may perhaps remember, were convicted of felonious conspiracy, and were all sentenced to ten years' transportation. Le Breton's sentence, the judge told him, would have been for life, but for the contrition he had exhibited shortly before his apprehension.

As Levasseur passed me on leaving the dock, he exclaimed in French, and in a desperately savage tone, 'I will repay you for this when I return, and that infernal

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Trelawney too.' I am too much accustomed to threats of this kind to be in anyway moved by them, and I therefore contented myself by smiling, and a civil 'Au revoir—allons!'

VEGETABLE CURIOSITIES.

RAPIDITY OF VEGETABLE GROWTH.

THE rapidity of the growth of tropical vegetation is in many cases truly astonishing, and far surpasses the greatest wonders of the kind observable in the less luxuriant native plants of our temperate clime. The advanced state of horticulture, however, has been instrumental in bringing into our own country living illustrations of many wonderful facts formerly only known to us by the almost incredible accounts of travellers. We have before us a paper by Mr Robert Scott, published in a late number of the 'Annals and Magazine of Natural History,' containing statistics of the growth of a bamboo cane in the large conservatory at Chatsworth, surpassing any similar facts we have ever seen in an authentic form. 'In the tropics,' says Mr Scott, 'the bamboo not only grows with astonishing rapidity, but attains a very great height—in some instances as much as 100 feet; this, together with its feathery elegance, places it in bold contrast to surrounding vegetation, and entitles it to rank second to the noble palm. But under artificial culture it is indeed seldom seen in anything like its native majesty—the extent of our horticultural structures not admitting of its full development. In some degree at least this defect is obviated at Chatsworth—the *Bambusa* being planted out in a border of rich loam [in the conservatory], with plenty of room for its roots, and the canes likewise, in most cases, having ample accommodation: so situated, the bamboo seems at home.'

Mr Scott states that on the 19th August 1846 he observed the crown of a cane just showing itself above the surface of the ground, and being led to infer from its appearance that it would ultimately attain to a large size, he resolved to watch its progress. By the 1st September—thirteen days after its first appearance above ground—the cane had reached to the height of 8 feet, being an average growth of nearly $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches per day. By the 7th of the same month its stature was increased to 19 feet, showing an average daily growth of 1 foot 10 inches, or very nearly an inch per hour!—no bad progress for a stout woody stem like the bamboo. On the 30th September the cane had attained to the height of 42 feet, having continued since the 7th to grow at the diminished rate of 1 foot per day. Being now in immediate contact with the roof of the house, it was necessary to arrest its progress at this stage, otherwise it would in all probability have extended 8 or 10 feet more.* Mr Scott states that the cane was cut down in December 1847, when the following observations of its dimensions were made:—Number of internodes, 32; circumference of the base of cane, 8 inches; circumference of the top, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch: the greatest circumference (9 inches) occurred 8 feet 3 inches from the base, and extended over 4 internodes; the two longest internodes measured each 1 foot 6 inches: they occurred at 19 feet 8 inches from the base, and were each 8 inches in circumference; the shortest internode was 11 inches, and was the lowermost on the cane. From the observations above detailed, it will be noticed that the cane varied in its rate of growth in the different stages of its development; but even if we take the average rate of growth of the entire period of its existence, we scarcely find less cause for wonder. It appears that, during its life of forty-two days, it grew to

a height of 42 feet from the ground, making an average growth of half an inch per hour, day and night, throughout the entire period—an extraordinary rapidity of development even for a luxurious tropical production. Mr W. McNab, the late superintendent of the Edinburgh Botanic Garden, measured, during a long summer-day, a growth of the young stem of a bamboo, to the extent of 7 or 8 inches.

Some of the *fungi*, or mushrooms, have been observed to grow with great rapidity. Professor Balfour ('Manual of Botany,' p. 554) mentions that *Bovista gigantea* in a single night has increased from the size of a pea to that of a melon. The force also (says the professor) with which they expand has been shown by their raising pavements under which they had been developed. Mr Ward, in his work 'On the Growth of Plants in Closely-glazed Cases,' gives another remarkable instance of the rapidity of fungoid development. 'I had been struck,' he says, pp. 68, 69, 'with the published accounts of the extraordinary growth of *Phallus fetidus*, which was said to attain a height of four or five inches in as many hours. I procured three or four specimens in an undeveloped state, and placed them in a small glazed case. All but one grew during my temporary absence from home. I was determined not to lose sight of the last specimen; and observing one evening that there was a small rent in the volve, indicating the approaching development of the plant, I watched it all night, and at eight in the morning the summit of the pileus began to push through the jelly-like matter with which it was surrounded. In the course of twenty-five minutes it shot up three inches, and attained its full elevation of four inches in one hour and a-half. The entire life of the *Phallus* was four days. Extraordinary as this may appear, I believe this rapidity of development to be surpassed by other fungi, as I was informed by Lady Arden—who has paid great attention to the species of this family, of which she has made numerous exquisite drawings—that the lives of some were so brief as scarcely to allow of sufficient time to finish her representations. Marvellous are the accounts of the rapid growth of cells in the fungi; but in the above instance it cannot for a moment be imagined that there was any increase in the number of cells, but merely an elongation of the erectile tissue of the plant.'

GIGANTIC TREES.

Of all organic beings, trees are gifted in an especial manner with extraordinary longevity. Not to speak of the baobab of Senegal, said to be more than 5000 years old, nor of the cedars near the village of Eden in Lebanon, believed by the Maronites to be the remains of the forest which furnished Solomon with timber for the famous Temple 3000 years ago; passing over these extraordinary instances, we find in our own country specimens sufficiently aged to call forth our most unqualified wonder and admiration. Oaks planted before the Conquest have weathered the blasts of more than eight centuries. The celebrated Fountains Abbey yew (a branch of which is now before us) waved its boughs in the breeze 1200 years ago, and the age of the yew at Fortingall, Perthshire, is stated to be from 2500 to 2600 years; the one at Brabourn churchyard, Kent, 3000 years. These living monuments of antiquity have in numerous instances attained to dimensions as extraordinary. A yew at Hedsor, Bucks, has a trunk stated to be 27 feet in diameter; and a banyan, on an island in the river Nerbudda, is believed to be the one mentioned by Nearchus in the time of Alexander the Great, as being capable of overshadowing 10,000 men. Speaking of this tree, Professor Balfour says—'Parts of it have been carried away by floods, but it can shade 7000 men; and its circumference, measuring its principal trunk only, is 2000 feet. The chief trunks of this tree greatly exceed our English oaks and elms in thickness, and are above 350 in number. The smaller stems are more than 3000 in number.' We have just stumbled upon a letter from the Rev. Thomas Ewing of Hobart Town, published

* It is a curious fact, well known to cultivators of such plants as the bamboo, palms, &c. that when they reach the roof of the structure in which they are growing, they immediately push their way through the glass, and often, if the weather is mild, grow upwards to a considerable height above the roof.

in the 'Botanical Gazette' by Mr Gould, wherein some similar living wonders are described. 'Last week,' says Mr Ewing, 'I went to see two of the largest trees in the world, if not the very largest that have ever been measured. I had heard of them in 1841, and I think mentioned them to you [Mr Gould] when in England. The person who found them then had forgotten their whereabouts; but I had a man out for three days in the forest in the direction intimated, and on the third he came in to say that he had rediscovered them; and I started with a party of five to measure them. They were both on a tributary rill to the North-west Bay River, at the back of Mount Wellington, and are what are here called swamp gums; but I do not know the specific name. I see that Dr Hooker, in his description of new species of *Eucalyptus*, in the "London Journal of Botany," names the stringy bark *Eucalyptus gigantea*; this would have been a more appropriate name for the swamp gum, which is a much larger tree. One was growing, the other prostrate; the latter measured to the first branch 220 feet; from thence to where the top was broken off and decayed, 64 feet—or 284 feet in all; so that with the top it must have been considerably beyond 300 feet. It is 30 feet in diameter at the base, and 12 at 220 or the first branch; and to that distance only would, from the stem alone, turn out more timber than any three of the largest oaks mentioned in London with their branches. We estimated it to weigh with the branches 440 tons! The standing giant is still growing vigorously without the slightest symptom of decay, and looks like a large church tower among the puny sassafras-trees. It measures, at 3 feet from the ground, 102 feet in circumference, and at the ground 130 feet! We had no means of ascertaining its height (which, however, must be enormous) from the density of the forest. I measured another not 40 yards from it, and at 3 feet it was 60 feet round; and at 130 feet, where the first branch began, we judged it to be 40 feet: this was a noble column indeed, and sound as a nut. I am sure that within a mile there are at least a hundred growing trees 40 feet in circumference.'

OBSTRUCTIONS IN DRAINS BY THE ROOTS OF PLANTS.

The attention of agriculturists has recently been directed to the obstructions of land-drains and other conduits of water, which have occurred throughout various parts of the country, and are occasioned by the roots of trees and other plants. The roots, after entering the drains, seem, by some structural changes, to be enabled to derive an extraordinary amount of nourishment from the running water, as is shown by the very remarkable manner in which they are developed. In some cases these obstructions have taken place to a considerable extent, and threaten to be highly prejudicial to judicious improvement, since upon efficient draining much of the success of other agricultural operations depends. Among trees, the ash, the elm, the poplar, and the willow, have been found in different localities to insinuate their roots into tile-drains, often doing much mischief; and in the more humble tribe of field-weeds, the amphibious polygonum, the equisetum, tussilago, and ragwort, have been severally observed to be formidable intruders. Of the last-named plant, Dr Neill stated, at a late meeting of the Botanical Society, Edinburgh, that he had received a specimen more than twenty years ago whose root had entered a drain by a very small orifice, but afterwards extended itself, completely filling the drain for a space of 20 feet. This fact should have some influence in diminishing the numerous assemblages of this showy field-flower, which so frequently give a golden glow to our pasture-lands in autumn. Indeed it is a well-known fact, that the eradication of weeds is little attended to, even by many farmers whose cultivation in every other respect is unexceptionable; but attention, it is hoped, will now be drawn to the importance of the operation. In most cases of drain obstruction, however, it has been found to be caused

by the roots of trees, field-weeds being comparatively little troublesome. It thus becomes a matter of interesting and important inquiry, in what manner those pleasant hedgerows and strips of green woodland, which tend so much to beautify and shelter cultivated districts, can be allowed to exist without affecting the drainage of adjoining fields? We should be loath to see such enlivening ornaments swept away; but if rural industry requires their abolition, why, then, we must submit. In the words of a recent writer in the 'Scottish Agricultural Journal,' we can admire the beauty of a bramble brake; but we rank not amongst those pseudo-philanthropic philosophers who would regret to see it cleared away to give place to a cottage garden, or a field of golden cereal.

NOTES FROM THE NETHERLANDS.

ROTTERDAM.

At nine in the morning of the 1st of July, after a pleasant voyage of twenty-three hours from London, in the steamer *Batavier*, I walked on shore at the Boompjes in Rotterdam, and my long-felt wish to visit Holland began its realisation. If the physical aspect of the country presented but few attractions, there was much in the character and habits of the people, in the results of their long-continued plodding industry, and sturdy assertion of their right to freedom, that would more than make up for the want of picturesque scenery. I was prepared to travel as best suited my inclination, and carried no other baggage than a knapsack, a light overcoat, and slim umbrella, which, in a glazed case, did duty as walking-staff. I purposed journeying along ways as well as high-ways, hoping thereby to gain as true an idea of the country as was possible in a visit of a few weeks.

Before I got off the pier, I was stopped by two officials in uniform, with swords at their side, who demanded my passport; the document being given up to them, is afterwards to be reclaimed at the bureau de police in the Stad Huis, where the particulars are noted in a book, together with the name of the place to which you may be bound. Next a customhouse officer cried halt; but on seeing my modest equipment, bade me pass on without examination. A few paces further, at the verge of the quay, I was again arrested by a group of men, who insisted on my going to the customhouse. In vain I represented that my baggage had been 'passed': whether or no, they would bar my passage. I made a feint of yielding, and doubling round a *vigilante*, as the cabs are named, made off towards the Berlijner Hof, the hotel to which I had been commended. The party had perhaps watched my movements, for they rushed after me, and were about to renew their clamour, when a tall man came up and dispersed them, after inquiring in English if the officer had passed me. I afterwards found that the stoppage was a 'dodge' on the part of the cab-drivers, their object being to compel their victims to escape from the difficulty by a ride.

It has been said that if you desire to be thoroughly taken out of your own country, you should not travel to Constantinople, but to Rotterdam, and to a great extent this is true; for in the latter city you see all in one what can only be met with piecemeal elsewhere. There is a street at Lincoln with a canal along the centre, which on a market-day presents a busy scene of vessels and vehicles, and with a row of clipped lime-trees on each side of the water-course, would offer no inapt likeness to a Rotterdam haven or Amsterdam gracht. A residence in New York had familiarised me with the aspect of streets looking cool and pleasant as leafy avenues; and any one who has visited Edinburgh, will have seen the broad-bordered caps worn without bonnets by the lower class of Dutchwomen; with this difference, that the Hollanders wear the borders nicely stiffened and fluted, while the Scotch leave them to flap and dangle in a manner approaching to slovenly. In general appearance the people are precisely what one has been accustomed to at home, a few peculiarities excepted. Great numbers of the

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working-classes wear sabots and coarse blue shirts, such as the English peasantry wore some sixty years ago when the saying was rife, 'blue shirts pays for all.' Caps, too, are the almost universal head-covering—a practice greatly to be commended, when one considers that the alternative is a hat—that phenomenon with which civilised people afflict their heads, to please others, not themselves. Then you see a constant lifting of hats or touching of caps in passing salutations; so much so, in fact, that the observances in this respect become rather oppressive.

Hood's description of Rotterdam is perfect; those who have read the poem will have a clearer idea of the city than could be conveyed by a volume of prose. He writes—

'Tall houses with quaint gables,
Where frequent windows shine;
And quays that lead to bridges,
And trees in formal line,
And masts of spicy vessels
From western Surinam—
All tell me you're in England,
But I'm in Rotterdam.'

The poet further calls it a 'vulgar Venice,' and to a stranger the queen of the Adriatic can hardly present a more striking appearance. Land and water are so strangely and picturesquely intermingled, the busy life that pervades both is so thoroughly in keeping with the scene, that to walk about and look on with curious eye is occupation enough. Turn your eye which way you will, you see a bridge, its strong pillars rising aloft, bearing the heavy cross-beams by which each portion is counterpoised. The whole is painted white; and the wooden floor slopes gently upwards from each side to the centre. Presently a tall-masted vessel floats up; the two men always in attendance at the little lodge erected close by run out, they withdraw the iron wedges from the staples, and then with a slight pull at the chain hanging from the cross-beams, each half of the bridge begins slowly to rise: before they are at the perpendicular the *schuit* has passed; a push at the cross-beams sends them up again, the men spring to the centre to accelerate the descent, impatient boys scramble after them, the wedges are replaced, and the stream of traffic which had been momentarily interrupted resumes its course with no more delay than is caused by the issuing of a dray from one of the side-streets in the Strand.

My walks up and down in Rotterdam gave me the key to several matters that had puzzled me when living in New York. The American farmer drives to market with two horses at a fast trot, harnessed to a light narrow wagon, with side rails rising high behind at a sharp curve: the Dutch farmer does the same. The New York milkman goes his round in a similar wagon, supplying his customers from two bright cans placed in front of his seat: the Dutchman does the same. New York builders frequently erect whole rows of houses, side, back, and middle, leaving the entire front to be built up last: I saw the same process in Rotterdam, where many new houses were 'going up.' Here, too, was the original of the clumsy truck or dray which the 'carmen' of New York drive about the streets by hundreds. Here, too, the reason why shopkeepers' names are so perseveringly painted on each door-post in Broadway and other business thoroughfares. Here, too, the frequent occurrence of the announcements BAKKERIJ, BLEEKERIJ, and KOEKIJ, sufficiently explained why in the overseas city a baker's shop was called a bakery, a bleaching-ground a bleachery, and a cake-shop a cooky store; and the exposing of groceries in open barrels ranged in rows in the shops also accounted for the similar practice still existing in New York. Who would have thought that the early settlers at the mouth of the Hudson, whose town-council 'met one day and smoked their pipes,' would have left such enduring traces behind them?

The literalness of announcements on sign-boards amuses a stranger: provision-dealers tell you in painted capitals over their windows that they have 'Boter te koop, Kaas te koop'—'Butter to sell, cheese to sell'; and this not

in back lanes only, but in the Hoog Straat. In this street a printed label on a basement door stated, 'Hier is een kelder te huur'—'Here is a cellar to let'—a conveyancer could not wish for greater detail or exactitude. Our 'Mangling done here' is advertised by 'Hier mangelt men'; the mangle, however, instead of being turned with a winch and a rope, is pushed to and fro by a man who stands at one end of the machine. In Rotterdam too, as in all Dutch towns, the houses are not numbered according to the streets, but in districts. Thus Wyk 4. 349, means No. 349 in the fourth Wyk, or ward of the city; an inconvenient arrangement in some respects, as it is far easier to follow the numbers in a street than over a whole quarter, where you cannot tell the direction of their beginning or ending. Mistakes of delivery or address frequently occur in consequence even among the natives.

In going about the streets, the leaning over of the house-fronts never fails to excite attention; and nearly all travellers tell us that this effect is produced by subsidence of the foundations. This may be true in a few cases; but a very little examination shows that whole streets were originally built in the sloping position: the backs of the houses present no such deviation from the perpendicular, neither is the roof-line altered. I heard two reasons assigned for this departure from ordinary rules of architecture: one, that the inclination was given the better to preserve the front walls from injury by weather; the other, that it was a modification of the old style of building, in which the upper storeys projected over the lower, and was adopted to gain more room. Modern builders avoid this overtopping, which, however picturesque, looks dangerous; and new houses in Rotterdam, as well as elsewhere, are erected with more regard to a right line.

I was especially struck with the appearance of the vessels—coasters and inland traders, which crowd the havens. So clean, so bright, so polished: no scratches, no bruises, no marks of rough usage: you fancy they must have been kept under a glass-case; and you no longer accuse Dutch painters of flattery in putting such a high finish to the vessels in their pictures. The fenders suspended from the bulwarks are curved to fit the protuberant side, and strengthened at either end by polished brass ferules: the heel of the bowsprit, the bitts and windlass, the rudder head, are similarly decorated and painted in gay colours. The little cabins are a perfect wonder of formal neatness, and the *woman* and her family not less clean than the most precise residents on shore. Some of them were washing clothes, and the tubs were so contrived as to hang over the vessel's side by means of a bracket, whereby the splashing fell into the canal, and slopping of the deck was avoided. Many of these craft are floating shops for the sale of matting, crockery, brooms, brushes, firewood, &c. and on fine days the stock in trade is displayed partly on the quay and on the deck. When business grows slack, the owners cast off their moorings, and take up a new position in another street.

Mechanical employments are generally worth a little observation. I stopped more than once to watch carpenters at their work, and soon saw that in respect of tools they are a hundred years behind British artificers. Their planes are very long and narrow; taking off wide shavings with them is out of the question; the chisels are heavy and clumsy, resembling those of shipwrights; and the brace or stock used with a bit for boring holes is of a real primitive form, precisely similar to those represented in old woodcuts of the fifteenth century. I looked in vain for a grindstone: there was nothing but the flat short rubstone, with a tray of water by its side, such as English carpenters wearied themselves over a generation or two ago. In one place there was an expedient to save labour which I had not seen before: a man was sawing firewood into short lengths with a saw suspended in a frame, and counterpoised by a weight at the end of a lever. He had therefore only to push the saw forwards, which movement threw up the weight, and as the latter fell, the saw came back to the man's hand without any effort on his part. The men working in a *loodgieterij* (plumber's shop) were not better provided with tools than the *timmermans* (car-

penters); and with this fact it is not easy to reconcile another fact—that of their work being sound and good, though not light or tasteful. This result is only obtained by slowness: one day's labour with such instruments is not worth more than half a one with perfect tools. At every smithy you see a rack constructed of strong posts and joists, within which horses are placed while being shod. A stout rail at one end, and a chain stretched across the other, effectually prevent his advancing or receding. The foot to be operated on is secured within the noose of a strong rope, and a turn being taken round one of the posts, is held by the hammerman while the smith nails on the shoe. This also differs from those which we see here: the calkins are much longer than on shoes made by an English smith, and the horse clinks over the clean-swept streets as though walking on pattens. These singularities are not peculiar to Rotterdam; I noticed them wherever I went in the Netherlands.

For a commercial town and port, Rotterdam is remarkably clean. Carts go from house to house to collect the refuse brought from within; but the cleaning of the streets devolves upon the inhabitants, each householder being required to sweep in front of his own residence; and the servants may be seen every morning sweeping from each side to the middle of the causeway, from which they afterwards remove the litter, and clean out the gutters. The plan of paving is objectionable; the portion of the street which corresponds with the *trottoir* of English towns is generally throughout Holland occupied by short posts or stone pillars, with an ornamental chain stretched from one to the other. Immediately outside of this is the gutter—a square drain, nearly a foot in depth, covered by a hinged wooden flap, which, in a series of lengths of ten or twelve feet, stretches from one end of a street to the other. These flaps can of course be turned back when the channel beneath needs cleansing; but they have a make-shift and slovenly appearance, and by hiding the gutter, lead to neglect. In several places where the plank was broken, I observed the drain half-filled with stagnant sludge. This flap forms part of the footway, and the latter being on the same level as the roadway, is all alike dirty in wet weather. I could not fail to remark this defect some time afterwards when I walked into Amsterdam from Haarlem; frequent showers had fallen in the morning, and the principal thoroughfares were as sloppy as Fleet Street after a shower, with the disadvantage of being without raised side-walks, while vehicles are driven along at the side or the middle at the pleasure of the conductors. For these reasons a Dutch town cannot be properly judged of unless seen in foul as well as in fair weather. During heavy rains, the sill placed round the entrance to cellars is an insufficient protection; the water rises over it, and floods the apartment below. Rotterdam is subject to the additional evil of inundations: that part of the city beyond the dam on which the Hoog Straat is built, is flooded by high tides ten or twelve times every year. A physician at whose house I called informed me that he frequently visits his patients when his carriage is up to the axles in water. A plan to remedy this serious casualty has been drawn up by Mr Beijerinck, one of the government engineers, combining with this improvement the erection of a suspension-bridge across the Maas, and the building of a suburb on the opposite side of the river. The latter is an important desideratum; for at present Rotterdam is, as the natives say, spreading itself too much over the turf—that is, farther from the river; and no true Dutchman likes to live without water at his very door. The new quarter would afford ample accommodation in this respect. It is, in truth, somewhat remarkable to stand on the Boompjes, and see nothing but quiet meadows and rows of trees beyond the stream. The contrast is striking; on one side the busy stir of commerce, on the other solitude—not even a summer-house breaks the level of the low green bank. The throwing over of a bridge would further afford opportunity for establishing public gardens—a means of recreation much wanted in Rotterdam.

Dr van der P—, the physician above alluded to, very kindly invited me to pass an evening at his house

He conducted me over the rooms of the Bataafsch Genootschap, a scientific society, first established in 1669 by a clockmaker, who furnished gratuitously the large collection of old philosophical instruments which yet remains. Besides these, which are chiefly for statics and dynamics, there is a good supply of electrical and magnetic apparatus of modern construction. Courses of lectures are delivered every winter, but are not very well attended: the taste for scientific and philosophical pursuits is not yet sufficiently cultivated in Rotterdam. A number of volumes in the library attracted my attention as being analogous to those of our ordnance survey: they contained large engraved plans of the chief rivers of Holland, with all the levels carefully laid down. It is not easy to conceive how such a work could be dispensed with in a country where the streams have to be coaxed and coerced into good behaviour. It was published at the expense of government. After this inspection we went to a Koffy huis outside the town-gate, overlooking the flat meadows towards Schiedam. Here a number of chairs and tables were ranged under the rows of thickly-planted trees, at one of which we seated ourselves. The doctor lit a cigar, and called for a bottle of wine, which we drank *al fresco*, while male and female musicians twanged guitars and sang sentimental songs for a guerdon of small coins; and from every group went up wreathing columns of smoke into the foliage above, and the waiter was incessantly moving about with a pan of lighted turf in his hand, to answer the iterated calls of 'Jan, flammeure.' Among other subjects we talked of physicians' fees: 'Ah!' said the doctor, 'a medical man does not get rewarded here as in London: he is satisfied with a fee of from one to two guilders; and an income of a thousand guineas a year would place a man in that respect at the head of the profession in Rotterdam.'

It needs but a little calculation to show how much labour must be incurred to realise such an amount at the rate of two florins a visit. Next we fell upon taxation, and on this point Dutchmen can speak feelingly: a tax must be paid for every window in a house, even if there be but one. If your house have but one chimney, you are charged three florins a year for it; for two, five florins; for three, seven florins; and so on. For each maid-servant you pay nine florins yearly; and the law with regard to them is rather curiously applied. The doctor keeps three female servants, at the charge of twenty-seven florins; but he has also a hired coachman, and for four servants the rate is increased to twelve florins each; thus the tax becomes forty-eight florins. This, however, is not the finish: a man-servant is charged ten florins extra, which is nearly the same as reckoning five servants; and last there comes an additional charge of 33 per cent. on the whole assessments. Fifty florins annually are paid for the two carriage horses; and 100 florins for the patentee or license to practise. An impost is also placed on household furniture, varied according to style and class: 'And yet,' continued my worthy entertainer, 'we are always ready to pay; and we love our king and our country better than any other in the world. If the French had come in 1830, we were well prepared to receive them.' With this remark, so eminently characteristic of a Hollander, we brought our sitting to a close.

Other topics not less interesting came on for discussion when we were afterwards seated in the doctor's drawing-room; but, leaving these for the present, I was pleased with an opportunity to see something of a Dutch interior. The furniture was good, but plain, and the apartment was evidently one of those which undergo a frequent cleaning, but are seldom used. Here I first observed a peculiarity which I subsequently found prevalent in other towns—that of making all the doors of the room but one appear as part of the wall. You see a smooth papered surface; suddenly a portion of it gives way, moves outwards, and gives you a view of another room, or a passage, or staircase; and presently, by a little closer inspection, you discover three or four other doors contrived in a similar way.

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On another evening I went to St Laurent's church, towards the close of the service, to hear the organ, which exceeds that of Haarlem in size, and rivals it in power. I got upon a raised seat in the deep recess of one of the corner windows, and was perfectly astonished at the view of the vast assemblage. Here, in a busy commercial town, on a working day, fully a thousand men and women had met to listen to a sermon, and not on any extraordinary occasion, but the usual evening for worship. I was endeavouring to reconcile this fact with what I had heard concerning the small attendance at philosophical lectures, when the sermon closed, and the *voorzanger* gave out a hymn. The qualities of the organ came out effectively in the preliminary air, and never shall I forget the burst of sound when the singing began! Not one of that numerous congregation appeared to be silent; all sang with a spirit and heartiness that I have never heard equalled. I was far enough removed to escape any harshness of tone, and as I listened to the pealing and sonorous harmony, I felt that it alone was well worth a voyage across the German Ocean.

Such singing—that is, as regards simultaneity and earnestness—belongs to the history of the past in England; its existence in Holland, I afterwards found reason to believe, is mainly due to the system of instruction pursued in the schools—a subject to be noticed hereafter. On the following day, favoured with letters of introduction from the hospitable doctor, I left Rotterdam by railway for Delft.

MANUFACTURE OF PORT WINE.

In a series of recent pamphlets on the wine-trade of Portugal,* the whole art and mystery of wine-making and wine-compounding in that country is thoroughly exposed; and for the first time we learn that even the farmers of the Alto Douro are all but uniformly in the practice of mixing their wines with the elder-berry, sugar, and brandy—the first to impart to it a flavour somewhat but distantly resembling port of the best quality, the second to give it sweetness, and the last to add body and strength. In consequence of the prevalence of this system, there is probably more than double the quantity of port wine exported that is actually produced in the wine district. Hence it is that the genuine juice of the grape of the Alto Douro, so much esteemed by our aristocratic ancestors, has now sunk into the character of a kitchen wine, and is little more thought of by the fashionable world than the 'heavy wet' of the London hackney-coachmen. The pamphlets above referred to reprobate the present system, and call upon the wine-farmers to abandon it as injurious to their own interests as well as those of their country. These pamphlets seem throughout to be characterised by an honesty and independence of sentiment which are but little akin to the mere mercantile or money-making spirit.

It has been alleged by the favourers of the above system, that the English taste with respect to port wine has changed; and that instead of wine possessing a fine delicate aroma, derived from the superior climate of certain exposures in the district of the Alto Douro, the English wine-drinkers now demand port that is black, strong, and sweet; and the wine-farmer being bound to conform to the tastes of his customers, has no alternative but to mix his wine with elder-berry, brandy, and sugar, in order to produce the article required. Although the substances here said to be used are far from poisonous in their nature, yet they are all of a coarse and indigestible description, and when largely partaken of, are calculated to impair the functions of the stomach, and to induce a heaviness and lethargy the reverse of genial or agreeable, and the system followed has at last resulted in the wines of the Alto Douro being in a great measure excluded from the dining-tables of the aristocracy of England. The quantity of elder-

berry used may be estimated by the fact, that it is more extensively grown in the district of the Douro than the grape itself, and is admittedly used in an equal quantity in the wine manufacture.

The wine district of Portugal, where the port wine of commerce is produced, extends along the banks of the river Douro from the town of Mazatiro to a short way beyond the town of I. Jao da Pesqueira, being an extent of little more than eight leagues. The district varies in breadth, but it may be stated as averaging about three leagues. The grape grown in the district varies in richness according to the quality of the soil, its proximity to the river, and its exposure to the genial breezes of the south and west. The richest soils are those which border on the river, especially on its northern bank; for, having a southern exposure, they uniformly produce grapes of the best quality. As you rise into the more elevated situations, where the air is chiller, and the exposure to the storms of winter is greater, a grape is produced whose juice is thinner and more watery, and altogether different from the produce of the richer soils near the river. The port-wine district is thus of a circumscribed extent, and the portion of it where wines of the best quality are produced is still more limited, and would thus be capable only of supplying a limited demand. There is grown, however, a sufficient quantity of grapes to produce 20,000 pipes of port of the first quality annually—the total annual production amounting to about 100,000 pipes.

The pamphlets to which we have referred show that the genuine unmixed wine of the most elevated point of the Douro district is of itself sufficiently rich and nutritious (with the addition of about from 7½ to 10 per cent. of brandy, which is necessary for its preservation) to form a healthful and exhilarating beverage; and but for the extraneous substances with which it is drugged, even it would create a demand which would much enhance its price in the market, and restore its character among the upper classes of England. If the same attention, indeed, were bestowed on the cultivation of the vine that is devoted to the mixing and adulterating of the wine, a greater quantity of port wine would be produced and exported than at present, and a much higher price obtained for it; thus illustrating the old adage in a larger sense than usual—that 'honesty is the best policy,' and that we cannot do injustice to our fellow-men, and hope to thrive by it. The productions of a country, indeed, form a good barometer, indicating strikingly the moral and intellectual attributes of its population; for where the articles produced are of the best quality, and free from adulteration, it evinces a deep sense of truthfulness on the part of the producers, which is uniformly accompanied with all other blessings.

WHEN THE SUMMER COMES.

I ONCE knew a little boy, a little child, of three years old; one of those bright creatures whose fair loveliness seems more of heaven than of earth—even at a passing glimpse stirring our hearts, and filling them with purer and holier thought. But this, the little Francie, was more of a cherub than an angel—as we picture them—with his gladsome hazel eyes, his dazzling fairness, his clustering golden hair, and his almost winged step. Such he was, at least until sickness laid its heavy hand on him; then indeed, when, after days of burning, wasting fever—hours of weary restlessness—the little hand at last lay motionless outside the scarcely whiter coverlet of his tiny bed, the fair, still head pressed down upon the pillow, and the pale face gazing with the silent wonder of returning consciousness on the anxious ones around it; then indeed a bright yet pitying look would flit across it, or dwell in the earnest eyes—a look such as we assign to angels in our dreams, when some fond fancy seems to bring them near us, weeping for mortal griefs beyond their remedy.

It was a strange sickness for one so young—the

* By Mr Joseph James Forrester, of the firm of Olney, Webber, and Forrester, wine-merchants, Oporto.

struggle of typhus fever with a baby frame; but life and youth obtained the victory; and quicker even than hope could venture to expect, the pulses rallied, the cheeks grew round and rosy, and the little wasted limbs filled up again. Health was restored—health, but not strength: we thought this for a while. We did not wonder that the weakened limbs refused their office, and still we waited on in hope, until days, and even weeks, passed by: then it was found that the complaint had left its bitter sting, and little Francie could not walk a step, or even stand.

Many and tedious and painful were the remedies resorted to; yet the brave little heart bore stoutly up, with that wonderful fortitude, almost heroism, which all who have watched by suffering childhood, when the tractable spirit bends to its early discipline, must at some time or other have remarked. Francie's fortitude might have afforded an example to many; but a dearer lesson was given in the hopeful spirit with which the little fellow himself noted the effect of each distressing remedy, marking each stage of progress, and showing off with eager gladness every step attained, from the first creeping on the hands and knees, to the tiptoe journey round the room, holding on by chairs and tables; then to the clinging to some loving hand; and then at last the graceful balancing of his light body, until he stood quite erect alone, and so moved slowly on.

It was in autumn this illness seized on the little one, just when the leaves were turning, and the orchard fruits becoming ripe. His nurse attributed it all to his sitting on a grassy bank at play on one of those uncertain autumn days; but he, in his childish way, always maintained 'It was Francie himself—eating red berries in the holly bower.' However this may have been, the season and the time seemed indelibly impressed upon his mind. In all his long confinement to the house, his thoughts continually turned to outward objects, to the external face of nature and the season's change, and evermore his little word of hope was this, 'When the summer comes!'

He kept it up throughout the long winter and the bleak cold spring. A fairy little carriage had been provided for him, in which, well wrapped up from the cold, and resting on soft cushions, he was lightly drawn along by a servant, to his own great delight, and the admiration of many a young beholder. But when any one attempting to reconcile him the better to his position—expatiating on the beauty or comfort of his new acquisition, his eager look and word would show how far he went beyond it, as, quickly interrupting, he would exclaim, 'Wait till the summer comes—then Francie will walk again!'

During the winter there was a fearful storm: it shook the windows, moaned in the old trees, and howled down the chimneys with a most menacing voice. Older hearts than Francie's quailed that night, and he, unable to sleep, lay listening to it all—quiet, but asking many a question, as his excited fancy formed similitudes to the sounds. One time it was poor little children cruelly turned out, and wailing; then something trilling, with its last hoarse cry; then wolves and bears, from far-off other lands. But all the while Francie knew he was snug and safe himself: no fears disturbed him, whatever the noise may have done. Throughout the whole of it he carried his one steadfast hope, and in the morning, telling of it all, with all his marvellous thoughts, he finished his relation with the never-failing word of comfort, 'Ah! there shall be no loud wind, no waking nights, when once the summer comes!'

The summer came with its glad birds and flowers, its balmy air; and who can paint the exquisite delight of the suffering child that had waited for it so long? Living almost continually in the open air, he seemed to expect fresh health and strength from each reviving breath he drew, and every day would deem himself capable of some greater effort, as if to prove that his expectation had not been in vain.

One lovely day he and his little playfellows were in

a group amusing themselves in part of the garden when some friends passed through. Francie, longing to show how much he could do, intreated hard to be taken with them 'along the walk just to the holly bower.' His request was granted, and on he did walk; quick at first, then slowly slower; but still upheld by his strong faith in the summer's genial influence, he would not rest in any of the offered arms, though the fiful colour went and came, and the pauses grew more and more frequent. No; with a heavy sigh he admitted, 'Tis a very, very long walk now; but Francie must not be tired: sure the summer is come.' And so, determined not to admit fatigue in the face of the season's bright proofs around him, he succeeded in accomplishing his little task at last.

Thus the summer passed away, and again came the changing autumn, acting on poor little Francie to a degree he had never reckoned on, and with its chill, damp airs nearly throwing him back again. With a greater effort even than before, he had again tried the walk to the holly bower, the scene of his self-accusing misdemeanour as the cause of all his sufferings. He sat down to rest; above his head, as the autumnal breeze swept through them, 'the polished leaves and berries red did rustling play;' and as little Francie looked upwards towards them, a memory of the former year, and of all the time that had passed since then, seemed for the first time mournfully to steal over his heart. He nestled in closer to his mother's side; and still looking up, but with more thoughtful eyes, he said, 'Mamma, is the summer quite gone?'

'Yes, my darling. Don't you see the scarlet berries, the food of winter for the little birds?'

'Quite gone, mamma, and Francie not quite well?'

His mother looked away; she could not bear her child to see the tell-tale tears his mournful little words called up, or know the sad echo returned by her own desponding thoughts. There was a moment's silence, only broken by the blackbird's song; and then she felt a soft, a little kiss, upon her hand, and looking down, she saw her darling's face—yes, surely now it was as an angel's—gazing upward to her, brightly beaming, brighter than ever; and his rosy lips just parted with their own sweet smile again as he exclaimed in joyous tones, 'Mamma, the summer will come again!'

Precious was that heaven-born word of childish faith to the careworn mother, to cheer her then, and with its memory of hope, still to sustain her through many an after-experiment and anxious watch, until at last she reaped her rich reward in the complete realisation of her bright one's hope. Precious to more than her such words may be, if bravely stemming our present trouble, whatsoever it be—bravely enduring, persevering, encouraging others and ourselves, 'even as that little child'—we hold the thought, that as the revolving years bring round its different seasons, as day succeeds to night—and even as surely as we look for this, and know it—so to the trusting heart there comes a time—it may be soon or late, it may be now, or it may be then—when this grief or grievance will have passed away; and so 'till all seem nothing—when the summer comes!

AUTOGRAPHS.

NO. 2.—THE LETTRE DE CACHET.

THERE was a period of some duration when the word *lettre de cachet*, whispered in the saloons of Paris, spread among its gay and thoughtless *habitués* affright and alarm. Even the courtiers in the gilded halls of Versailles, as they fluttered in their gallant trim around the dazzling pageant that represented grandeur and monarchy, turned pale as they heard a sound that presented to their bewildered imaginations visions of gloomy dungeons, of mysterious agents, and of machines of torture in every shape and form. The dusky walls

of the Bastille rose up in formidable array before their eyes; they heard the rolling of the carriage-wheels across the drawbridge that cut off every thought of communication with the busy world, and condemned them to silence, to sorrow, and perhaps to the grave. They knew that the presentation of the *lettre de cachet* to the governor of the Bastille was a signal that consigned them to oblivion; for their dearest friends, when once they heard that this act of power had been gone through, would trouble themselves no further as to their fate, lest they themselves should become participators in the folly, the guilt, or the punishment of the hapless prisoners.

The missives that originally emanated from the sovereign were of three kinds—letters patent, letters under the great seal, and letters under the privy seal. The first was open to all: it usually commenced with, 'To all men greeting,' or 'To all those whom it may concern,' or 'Know all men by these presents'—forms which, borrowed from the French law, were introduced by the Norman conquerors into England. These were signed by the king, countersigned by the secretary of state, and sealed with the seal of state. They were generally issued from the council of state, and were such edicts, ordinances, and charters as the sovereign in his council chose to promulgate; and to these were attached the words *par le roi en son conseil*. The second kind of missives were such grants of title, of property, of naturalisation, and of favour, as the king was pleased in the exercise of his prerogative to bestow: they were signed by him, and by the secretary of state, and were sent to the office of the keeper of the great seal to receive the authoritative impression; or to the keeper of the privy seal, when edicts of minor importance were required. But the *lettres de cachet* were not written upon parchment, nor upon ministerial paper; they were admitted to be legal even upon the commonest sheet of paper; they were signed by the king, and countersigned by the secretary of state; they were then enveloped in another sheet of paper, and could only be opened by the individual to whom they were addressed; the guilt of high treason, and the consequent forfeiture of life, being the penalty attached to the breaking of the seal, or even to a clandestine knowledge of the contents. These letters were sent to individuals forming the different councils of state, when they were called upon to assemble for the purpose of deliberation, and were addressed only to one person, the commencement usually being—'I write this letter to inform you,' and the termination, 'I pray God to keep you in his holy care.'

The earliest use made of these letters for punishment, before they became so formidable an instrument of tyranny, was when peers, or men of power and rank, refused to appear before the monarch or his tribunals to answer for offences committed against the state: there were then forwarded *lettres de cachet* announcing the banishment from the country, or the exile from the court, of the accused. Many such letters were issued by Louis XI.: they are still extant, and show the refined artifices and crooked policy pursued by the crafty and cruel monarch; but it remained for the still more wily and experienced Richelieu to convert these letters into instruments of unrestrained despotism. It was affirmed by his contemporaries, and has been generally believed, that the suggestions of Father Joseph du Tremblay were usually followed by this powerful minister; and that every idea the priest furnished him with was for the restraint of the liberty of the subject, and for the increase of punishment; and that therefore whatever unpopularity the cardinal was compelled to bear, arose out of his lending a willing ear to his advice.

Father Joseph, a name execrated by the majority of

historians, had originally been a military man, but had become a capuchin monk. Banished to Avignon, he had been recalled by Richelieu, to give him his silent aid in state affairs; for which his cunning, his pliancy, and his subserviency, were admirably adapted. Promises were perpetually held out to him at every dark step he took, and on every occasion when he was entangled in a maze, that upon his extrication from his difficulties he should be raised to a bishopric. But he was always disappointed: the mitre was always placed before his eyes, but he was never allowed to encircle his brow with it. Imprisonment in the fortress of the Bastille was pointed out by him to the cardinal as the best means of getting rid of a troublesome enemy; but as occasionally the éclat which would attend upon such a measure might create a clamour, or awake some disturbance, it was thought right that everything connected with the seclusion of the individual should be conducted with the utmost silence and secrecy. The arrest was to be made with as little publicity as possible: the guard necessary to take possession of the accused was to be formed of persons in whom the utmost confidence could be placed, and who, from being immediately about the king, were attached to the royal person. The prisoner was to be taken at a stated hour to his place of confinement, to be received by the governor of the tower himself, who from that moment became responsible for his person, his actions, and his communication with the external world, and who alone knew the contents of the *lettre de cachet*.

This letter usually gave definite instructions to the governor as to the nature of the seclusion, whether the deep dungeon, the solitary cell, or a higher class of accommodation, was granted. It pointed out the treatment to which the prisoner was to be submitted, but generally in a conventional language, understood only by him to whom it was addressed. The letter in the days of Louis XIV. usually commenced, 'M. de Bernard, it being necessary that Mons. — should enter my castle of the Bastille, I write this letter to tell you my intention:' then follows such commands as it was considered necessary should be given. Several of those documents exist; and amongst others, in a collection of autographs, is seen one headed as above, with directions to allow the witnesses of the procureur-general to have access at a certain hour, for such purposes as they may require, to M. Beaujeu, confined within the castle of the Bastille. This order, signed by Louis, and countersigned by Colbert, is in the form which is generally understood to have conveyed the information that the procureur-general was about to send those miserable tools of power whose office it was to wring confession by torture, and then appear as witnesses of the acknowledgment of guilt. On the back is endorsed, in the handwriting of Colbert, signed with his name, 'Order to allow six persons, musqueteers, to M. Beaujeu, 8th of March, 1674.' The purpose for which these instruments of the ministers were admitted cannot be doubted; and, as if to confirm the suspicion such a document always carried with it, there are still stains of blood on the paper, evidently the grasp of the finger and the thumb of the executioner when delivering up the authority by which he had entered the Bastille, and upon which he had acted. Further research has led to the knowledge of the fact, that M. Beaujeu, suspected of a traitorous correspondence with the enemies of Spain, had been tried, and found guilty, on his own acknowledgment, of the facts laid to his charge.

There is evident proof of the lavish use which Cardinal Richelieu made of the *lettres de cachet*: there exist many historic documents besides those which are furnished by the writers of the period; and a glance at some of the portfolios which slumber upon the shelves of the National Library, would convince the literary man that there are sources from which romances might be created of far deeper interest than any mere work of imagination.

Mild, gentle, and winning were the manners of Cardinal Fleury: all who approached him were charmed with his prepossessing appearance: his soft and gentle tones sunk upon the ear of the listener, and every one left his presence with the conviction that he was governing France with a tender and paternal care; yet at the moment were the dungeons of the Bastille echoing with the groans of his captives, who called for pity, for mercy, or for vengeance! He who had been the dispenser of the charities of Louis XIV., who had been the friend of the poor and the needy, who was considered the kind-hearted and the tolerant teacher, became, as a minister, the most implacable of men, and the most fiery of zealots. His name is said to have been attached to between twenty and thirty thousand lettres de cachet! Any one pointed out to him as suspected of Jansenism, might be immediately arrested, and consigned to a prison.

Before him Louvois had used the same instrument in the name of religion: he is said to have sent eighty thousand persons to prison, with the vain hope of preventing the extension of Protestantism. He is generally accused of the utmost disregard of the liberty of the subject, and is reported to have given blank lettres de cachet to all persons of rank and station indiscriminately, the names of the victim to be inserted at their pleasure. The nobility made fearful use of this license: domestic servants, contumacious tradesmen who wanted their bills paid, parents who would not permit their daughters to be insulted, husbands whose attachment to their wives interfered with aristocratic licentiousness, all were shut up under various pretences. The hatred borne to the name of a lettre de cachet, and the mysterious stories told of the Bastille, urged the populace on, upon the first breaking out of the great Revolution, to demolish this gloomy fortress, this image of the despotism under which Paris had so long groaned. Upon the destruction of the edifice, seven state-prisoners only were found within the walls—an evidence that of late the lettres de cachet had been sparingly used.

Among the articles which were preserved are two manuscript volumes of singular utility in historical research. They were the day-books kept in the Bastille by the Governor De Launay, from the moment he was intrusted with the command, to the day on which he fell, together with his major, Lome Solbray, under the blows of a ferocious mob, that took him from the escort of the guard to whom he had surrendered. In them is the autograph of every prisoner on his leaving his dungeon, containing a promise that he would not divulge anything that had come to his knowledge within the Bastille. Among them are several names of individuals who have been distinguished in the world, and a series of interesting manuscripts are bound up together. The papers preserved were few in number: but they included several of those lettres de cachet which serve to illuminate the page of history. With the Bastille has disappeared, it is hoped, for ever such arbitrary means of governing a nation. With that fortress, and with the lettres de cachet, fell the despotism of the monarchs of the race of Bourbon. It is a fact well known, that, notwithstanding the short distance between Versailles and Paris, the news of what was passing in the city, while the inhabitants of the Faubourg St Antoine were destroying the Bastille, did not reach the court, busy with its usual round of festivities and frivolities. The evening passed off without Louis XVI. having the slightest suspicion that his crown was passing away. Laroche-foucauld Liancourt, when his majesty had retired to rest, entered his bedroom, and told him that the Bastille was in the hands of the mob.

'What say you, duke?' throwing himself into a chair—'Then there is a revolt?'

'Sire,' replied the nobleman with solemnity, 'there is a revolution!' It was so, and the wounds it has inflicted upon humanity are almost incurable; but still it must not be forgotten that the ministers to whom was committed the charge of watching over a mighty

nation, neglected the solemn duties imposed upon them. They did not seek to repress crime; but they fostered, and then punished it. Their instruments were as abominable as their policy. But generations, thank God, have now learned to rely upon better maxima.

THE FIRST PUPIL OF THE CLAREMONT DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION.

THE village of Glasnevin is pleasantly situated on the river Tolka, and though not more than two miles from Dublin, from its rural and retired appearance, it might be supposed far from any city. It is interesting from being associated with the names of some celebrated Irishmen. It was the favourite resort of Tickell, Addison, Swift, Delany, Steele, Sheridan, and Parnell; and some of the relics of former days are still to be found there. Delville, situated on a gentle eminence in the midst of lawns and plantations, was formerly the seat of Dean Delany, and was often the scene where these distinguished literary men assembled to enjoy social intercourse. It was there that Swift and his Stella delighted to be received as guests. A little temple stands on a sloping lawn decorated with Mrs Delany's paintings, and a medallion bust of Stella; and under the building a printing-press was found, which Swift used in printing some of his satires. We have often sat in the shady bower, which still goes by the name of Stella's Bower, where it is said that accomplished lady loved to sit and read or work. The Botanic Garden occupies the ground which was once Tickell's demesne. When we last visited it, some years since, it covered thirty acres: it has probably been added to since then. It is laid out on scientific principles, and with infinite skill in the combination of great beauty with all that is interesting and instructive to the botanist. Besides the taste displayed in the disposition of the splendid collection of plants, the garden has natural advantages, which add considerably to its charms: a river which flows through it, fine old timber, and undulations of ground, give a variety seldom to be met with in places systematically laid out. Claremont, the institution for the deaf and dumb, is in the immediate neighbourhood. The house is beautifully situated in the midst of meadows and garden, which extend over nineteen acres. Seventy pupils are lodged there; and it would afford accommodation for 120 if the funds were sufficient for their support. A most successful system of education for the poor children is carried on. Like many other of our national institutions, the establishment of this is owing to the humanity and zeal of a single individual, who has since emigrated to Africa, to the loss of his native country. But long before he left its shores, he had the gratification of seeing the institution which his zealous exertions called into existence firmly established, and it remains a noble memorial of worth and energy.

Dr Charles Orpen having finished his medical and surgical studies in Edinburgh and London, made a tour through the south and west of England (having previously visited the north) to examine the principal hospitals, prisons, manufactories, &c. Among a number of letters of introduction, he had one to Dr Lys of Birmingham, who handed him the first report of an institution for the deaf and dumb just established there. So little interest did Dr Orpen feel at that time in the subject, that he laid the document aside, and did not visit the school; but he afterwards happened to look into the report, and as he read, he became interested; and at length the wish to found an institution for the education of the deaf and dumb, the first ever attempted in Ireland, took complete possession of his mind. He selected from the Bedford Asylum, as the subject of preliminary experiment, Thomas Collins, a deaf and dumb child, because he appeared to him the most neglected. He succeeded in teaching him to pronounce any letter, syllable, word, or sentence

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in any language written in English characters, and to know a pretty large number of nouns and adjectives, and a few verbs, and some of the common particles. He could also reckon to any amount, write a pretty good hand, perform the first three simple rules of arithmetic, construct some sentences, and answer a few simple questions. The great patience exercised to forward Dr Orpen's object cannot be overrated. 'As soon as the institution was established,' says the doctor, 'I of course relinquished to it my little pupil.' Not only did the mind of the poor child expand, and his intellect brighten under this judicious training, but his affections, which had been totally without object, were now powerfully excited and tenderly cherished, and never yet were love and gratitude more strongly exemplified than in this poor boy. For a considerable time Dr Orpen taught in the school; but finding it interfered too much with his professional duties, a competent person was placed at the head of the establishment; but he still continued to give great part of his valuable time and attention to it. He traversed distant lands, that he might visit the foreign schools for the deaf and dumb, and corresponded largely with those engaged in educating them. His lectures, embodied in some of the annual reports of the Claremont Institution, contain a fund of interesting information, and a variety of anecdotes connected with the subject. A week never passed without Collins spending at least one day with Dr Orpen, whose care he repaid with unbounded love and almost religious devotion. The money that was given to him by visitors this poor child usually laid out in charity; but having at length accumulated a sum, he gave the whole to the institution, so that his name actually appeared in its reports as a contributor. Indeed among the many good feelings which it would have been impossible not to have observed in this deaf and dumb orphan, his peculiar tenderness for those who laboured under a similar misfortune to his own, and his anxious desire that they should participate in the advantages of education, were very touching. But it was not by his gift alone that he was of use to the establishment; from his superior intelligence, and the progress which he made, he soon became a monitor, and assisted in giving instruction. His letters, which appeared from time to time in the annual reports, were very interesting, as showing the quickness of observation which took account of all that was presented to him. His descriptions of the various exhibitions to which he was brought are remarkable for accuracy, and are given with amusing naïveté: the phraseology is like that of a foreigner. Among his letters, that to George IV. was printed. When the king visited Ireland, he felt a strong desire to write to him, and mentioned it to a friend, who conceived it was but a vague notion which would soon pass away. Collins, however, composed a letter; and having procured some gilt-edged paper, he made a fair copy; and having directed it to his majesty, consigned it to the post-office. It ran thus:—

'MY DEAR GEORGE—I hope I will see you when you come here to see the deaf and dumb pupils. I am very sorry that you never did come here to see them. I never saw you. You ought to see the deaf and dumb boys and girls. I will be very glad to see you, if you will come here often to see me. Did you ever see the deaf and dumb in London? In what country did you see the deaf and dumb? The boys and girls are much improving, and very comfortable here. Are you interested in seeing the deaf and dumb? All the soldiers in the armies belong to you. The king of England gives a great deal of money to them. You must write a letter to me soon. I am very much pleased with writing a letter to you. I want to get a letter from you. I am much polite, and very fond of you. How many brothers and sisters have you? Would you like to see me at Claremont? I could not go to London, because there is too much money to pay to the captain of a ship for me. I am an orphan, and a very poor boy. God will bless you. I love God very much, because he is the

Creator of all things, and ~~sent~~ his Son to save us from sin. He supports us, and gives us everything, and makes us alive in the world. Do you know grammar, geography, Bible, arithmetic, astronomy, and dictionary? I know them very little. Claremont is a very beautiful place; it has a great deal of meadows, ponds, lakes, trees, flowers, gardens, a horse, and an ass. I am thinking of everything, and to be polite to every one. Some of the deaf and dumb boys are always working in our garden. I have been at school for four years and a-half. I am sixteen years of my age. I am very delighted that I am improving very much. Perhaps I will be an assistant of the Deaf and Dumb School. There are forty-one pupils at Claremont. Where were you born? I was born in Dublin. I am quite deaf and dumb, and can speak very well. Would you like to correspond with me? I would be very fond of you. You ought to write a long letter to me soon. What profession are you of? I never saw you. I am very anxious to see you indeed, and would like to see the king of England very much. We want a new school-room, and we want to have more deaf and dumb boys and girls at Claremont, but we have not money enough to buy clothes and food for them. Will you send us some deaf and dumb children, and give us money to pay for educating them? I am your affectionate friend,

THOMAS COLLINS.

Claremont, Glamevin, near Dublin.

The king, although unused to being addressed by strangers through the medium of the post-office, and to the familiar style in which this letter was written, was sensibly touched by its unaffected simplicity; but no more was heard of it till a short time before his departure from Ireland, when one day the inmates of Claremont were greatly astonished to see one of the royal carriages drive up the avenue, and stop at the door. Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, and the gentleman who accompanied him, inquired for Thomas Collins, as they had been commanded by his majesty, in consequence, they said, of a letter which had interested the king deeply. The gentlemen stood at the far end of the drawing-room, to observe the boy's countenance as he read the letter which they brought. The boy read the address to himself, and turning the letter to open it, instantly perceived that the seal resembled those which he had seen on official letters from the castle, and guessed it was an answer to his letter to the king: he begged for scissors, that he might not break the seal; but none being at hand, he opened it most carefully. On reading the letter, which contained a draft in his favour on the king's banker for £10, he was in an ecstasy, which he testified so naturally by his words, countenance, and gestures, that the strangers were delighted. The sum was put into the savings' bank, and afterwards laid out in apprenticing him to a printer; and thus did it happen that he found his constant occupation in the diffusion of language. His quick and warm feelings, his intelligence and docility, and, above all, his ardent attachment to Dr Orpen, endeared him to that excellent man's family, and interested the friends and acquaintances who often met him at Dr Orpen's table. Nor did he there seem out of his place, his deportment was so gentlemanly. It is rare to find a vulgar person among the deaf and dumb on whom any pains have been bestowed: their visual perception is so acute and rapid, that what is uncouth or unmannered quickly strikes them. Poor Collins was made very happy by the present of a watch, bestowed on him by Dr Orpen's brother: it was on every account a most precious gift; and seldom has a watch been so often looked at and consulted. It would have been lost to him but for his quickness in detecting a pickpocket who had snatched it away: he pursued her, and with the assistance of a watchman, she was captured, and the watch found in her possession: she was prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. Collins subsequently fell into good hands, for a gentleman of large property, and engaged in the most bene-

violent pursuits, took him home to superintend a printing press; and here he lost farther trace of the first pupil of the first Irish institution for the education of the deaf and dumb.

ATMOSPHERIC WAVES.

On this subject a correspondent, who dates from Amble-side, writes as follows:—In an article on the Chemistry of Creation, in Part 79 of your Journal, you speak of the atmospheric waves, a phenomenon which is at present one of the subjects of scientific examination, and which has been observed for some time past to manifest itself more remarkably about the middle of November. Another remarkable and hitherto unexplained phenomenon, called the Indian Summer in North America, and l'Été de St Martin in Switzerland, occurs regularly in the same month, and lasts about the same time; from which concurrence and coincidence you conjecture, and very reasonably, I think, that the two phenomena are related to each other. I have now to propose to your consideration another, which seems to me to be related to both, and may perhaps furnish a clue for the explanation of the whole mystery, or at least indicate the line on which the examination should be pursued. It is this—that on the other side of the equator, in America, at the very same time, the heat of the weather is suddenly invaded by a cool *aura*, which the Spanish inhabitants of the country call the '*Yelos de San Andrés*,'—the Chills of St Andrew?—because they occur not long before the celebration of the festival of that saint and apostle. Now the synchronism of the phenomena in the two hemispheres, as it would seem to refer them to one and the same general cause, so the reversedness of their effects as to sensation, for I can speak to nothing else, would indicate that general cause to be magnetism. For supposing the atmospheric wave to be magnetic and polar, we ought to expect that the effects of it on either side the equator would be respectively reversed—that what was warm in the one hemisphere would be cold in the other.* Since, then, the phenomena answer exactly to this condition of polarity, I venture to submit that the atmospheric waves are somehow related to magnetism; and considering the warmth and coolness which attend them in the opposite hemispheres respectively, I would further suggest that the magnetism is *odyle*. I have lived many years in North and South America, and can answer for the regular recurrence of the Indian Summer and the *Yelos de San Andrés*, with more or less intensity, during all the time.

PAY YOUR DEBTS.

1. If you wish to secure the reputation of being an honest man, pay your debts.—2. If you would avoid bringing disgrace upon the religious party you belong to, pay your debts.—3. If you are anxious to get a good article, and be charged the lowest possible price for your goods, never delay to pay your debts.—4. If you wish to obtain such credit as your business may require, be sure to pay your debts.—5. If you would remain on terms of friendship with those you trade with, pay your debts.—6. If you would avoid embarrassing others who are depending upon the settlement of your account, pay your debts.—7. If you wish to prevent mistakes and litigation, keep your accounts well adjusted, and pay your debts.—8. If you wish to aid in the circulation of money, never let cash remain by you, but pay your debts.—9. If you would do to others as you wish them to do to you, you ought to pay your debts.—10. If you wish to stand clear of the charge of lying, and making false excuses, pay your debts.—11. If you desire to pursue your business with peace of mind, pay your debts.—12. If, in the expectation of death, you would like to leave your affairs in a satisfactory condition, pay your debts.—13. If you wish to do what is right in the sight of God and man, you must pay your debts.—14. Should your debts be ever so old, or should you have taken the benefit of the Act; if you have the means, you are not a just man unless you pay your debts. To enable you to pay, adopt the following advice:—Let your food, living, and equipage be plain, and not costly; avoid expensive clothing; abstain from wine and all intoxicating liquor, and never keep it in the house; do not sink your capital by purchasing plate or splendid furniture; have as few parties as possible; be

careful as to speculations, and never extend your trade beyond your means; never aspire to be shareholders in banks, railways, &c.; have as few men about you as is convenient, and none of a suspicious character; be determined to refuse all offers of partnerships; be careful as to lending money or being bound with others; avoid all lawsuits; keep your books posted, and look well to the accounts of your customers; bring up your family to economy and industry: If you observe these things, you will always be able, with God's blessing, to pay your debts.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

THE FLYING CLOUD.

Cloud! following sunwards o'er the evening sky,
Take thou my soul upon thy folds, and fly,
Swifter than light, invisible as air,

Fly—where, ah, where?

—Stay—where my soul would stay; then melt and fall,
Like tears at night-time shed, unseen by all;
As some sad spirit had been wandering round

The garden's bound—

Wandering, yet never finding rest nor calm;
Wounded and faint, yet asking not for balm;
Sick with dull fear lest joy's long-closed gate
May open—too late!

Cloud! sailing westward tinged with purple dye,
Mocking me, as all helplessly I lie;

Ah, cloud!—my longing err'd; for me were best
Another rest.

Then lift me with thee to those fields of air
Where earth grows dim, and upward, upward bear,
Till angels meet us with their wings of fire
That never tire.

Then, standing meekly at Heaven's golden door,
Filled, where I thirsted—rich, where once so poor,
I shall forget—ah! only, only pain;

Love will remain!

And sometimes, sweeping down on wings unfurled,
To work Heaven's unseen work throughout the world,
A happy spirit shall come wandering round

The garden's bound;

Dropping—not tears, but blessings; heavenly-willed,
Fulfilling what in life was ne'er fulfilled;
Since with the last great change the veil was torn,
And Love was born.

DECLINE OF ROYAL AND NOBLE FAMILIES.

It has often occurred to us that a very interesting paper might be written on the rise and fall of English families. Truly does Dr Borlase remark, that 'the most lasting houses have only their seasons, more or less, of a certain constitutional strength: they have their spring and summer sunshine glare, their wane, decline, and death.' Take, for example, the Plantagenets, the Staffords, and the Nevilles, the three most illustrious names on the roll of English nobility. What race in Europe surpassed in royal position, in personal achievement, our Henrys and our Edwards? and yet we find the great-great-grandson of Margaret Plantagenet, daughter and heiress of George Duke of Clarence, following the craft of a cobbler at the little town of Newport, in Shropshire, in the year 1637. Besides, if we were to investigate the fortunes of many of the inheritors of the royal arms, it would soon be discovered that 'the aspiring blood of Lancaster' had sunk into the ground. The princely stream flows at the present time through very humble veins. Among the lineal descendants of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent, sixth son of Edward I., king of England, entitled to quarter the royal arms, occur Mr Joseph Smart, of Halesowen, butcher, and Mr George Wilmot, keeper of the turnpike-gate at Cooper's Bank, near Dudley; and among the descendants of Thomas Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, fifth son of Edward III., we may mention Mr Stephen James Penny, the late sexton at St George's, Hanover Square.—*Burke's Anecdotes of the Peerage.*

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* Baron von Reichenbach has well conjectured that the effects produced on sensitive persons by magnets, crystals, &c. would be reversed in the southern hemisphere.